

Moving Mountains Mission to Guatemala

As a member of this team, I agree to:

1. Remember that I am representing Jesus Christ as well as my family, my local church, and my community on this mission. I realize that others on the team and in my host communities will look at me for an example of how a Christian acts, and I will not treat that responsibility lightly.
2. Remember that I am a guest working at the invitation of my hosts.
3. Remember that we have come to learn, as well as to help. I will resist the temptation to inform our hosts about “how we do things in America.” I will be open to learning about other people’s methods and ideas. I know that there are many different ways to accomplish the same objective, and know that my way is not necessarily the best.
4. Respect my team leader(s) and his or her decisions. Please remember that your leaders have spent countless hours trying to plan, prepare, and organize for this trip. The projects that have been planned have been well thought-out and in accordance with the needs and desires of our hosts.
5. Refrain from complaining. I know that traveling and working in developing countries can present unexpected changes in plans. Instead of becoming discouraged or complaining, I will be creative and supportive.
6. Attend all team meetings and evening devotions throughout the trip. If I become ill and unable to attend, I will notify both my crew leader and a mission team leader.
7. Refrain from illegal drugs and abstain from consumption of alcoholic beverages and the use of tobacco while on this trip.
8. Understand that our team’s work is but a tiny speck on the larger, long-term plan that our mission partners are trying to accomplish.
9. Follow up on all requirements for passports, visas, financial obligations, vaccinations, etc. I understand it is my responsibility to obtain informational updates prior to the mission, through emails, video-link trainings, etc.
10. Refrain from giving gifts, such as money, clothes, jewelry, etc. Although the intent of the giver is good, the result after we leave can cause problems for our hosts, and also result in jealousy among those who have not received gifts. If I feel compelled to give a gift to someone I have met, I will consult first with the team leader before I promise or give the gift, and I agree to let him or her make the final decision on this matter. This does not apply to the small fellowship tokens we will discuss and have approved before leaving home (like Salvation Bracelets). Gifts from sponsors and other items to be delivered to the children of the GIFTS Program should be coordinated through Robin McMillen.
11. Respect the advice I am given concerning my attire, eating and drinking, and other guidelines which will help keep me safe in the local community.
12. Bring only items that are essential to my work on my mission team. I understand that electronics (especially smartphones, iPhones, iPads, laptops) are not only a distraction during mission time, but also pose a theft/security risk for me and for my team. If I bring any of these items, I agree to adhere to the mission policy, which will be outlined in the “Mission Guidelines for Technology.” If I have any questions, I will ask a team leader prior to departing.
13. Refrain from using obscene, derogatory, and inappropriate language. I understand that even harmless comments or expressions can be misunderstood, misinterpreted, and viewed as offensive.

Moving Mountains Mission to Guatemala

Mission Guidelines For Technology

Your mission team leaders use technology - a lot! We love social media, emails, photos, etc. Technology, as we know, can be a powerful tool to bring those who are far from us, close to us at any given moment. We also know that many people have work-related responsibilities that they need to tend to even when they have taken “vacation” from their jobs. We want you to have access to technology, but we also want you to know that some mission teams actually prohibit the use of the Internet during mission experiences.

For some groups, the reasons that the Internet has been banned resulted from mission team members using technology in irresponsible ways. For example:

1. Not socializing with team members during free time – instead, using social media to connect with others at home.
2. Posting inappropriate photos, comments, and jokes that are misunderstood by those who are not in the mission group.
3. Careless handling of expensive devices: iPhones and iPads in particular. These items are extremely valuable in Guatemala – iPhones can be sold on the street for as much as \$800. In a culture where families make \$1.25/day, this poses a security risk for you and for your team members to be inadvertently waving your iPhone or iPad around, snapping photos for all to see.

So, this brings us to Moving Mountains. The leadership of Moving Mountains does not want to turn off the Internet signal at Hotel Candelaria. We want you to be able to connect with your family, your friends, and your financial sponsors back home. We want you to post a beautiful picture of you and your new best buddy from VBS. We want your families and friends at home to feel as if they are a part of your journey to Guatemala. We want you to be able to check your work email after-hours, and take care of the things you need to take care of while you are away.

In order for us to be able to do these things, we ask for your cooperation in these matters:

1. Save your email/phone calls home/status updates for after hours. Log on after worship, before breakfast, or when you have trouble sleeping at night.
2. Post photos and comments that are positive, encouraging, and uplifting. Save the “other” stuff for when you get home, and you want to share some of the harder moments of the mission with those closest to you.
3. Our hosts are incredibly proud, and very human in their needs. They do not want, or need, us to feel as if we are shocked by their living conditions, or their level of poverty. Allow our photographer to get those types of photos, respectfully, discretely, and with complete regard to their dignity.
4. Remember, what you post is simply read for content: people won't get the humor, or the story behind the comment. Your families will be worried about you. If you post: “Spent the best part of the night laying on the bathroom floor, sick as a dog,” people will worry even more. We are not asking you to be dishonest about your experiences, but we are asking for you to be smart and sensible about what you post.
5. You are welcome to bring your camera with you. You never know when you will want to capture that moment that you want to remember forever. But do not stray from your group, do not go by yourself to take a photo, and do not photograph the homes and people who feel uncomfortable with you there. Ask permission for a photo before taking it. Most people will be glad, but if they say, “No,” do not ask them again.
6. Do not plan to take computers or other expensive devices to the village. If you need to take your iPhone/smartphone because it is your only camera, please keep it well-hidden on your person at all times. Items left at the hotel should be stored securely in your room – the hotel has a safe that you can store money, passports, or expensive things in and each room has a small lock box that you can store items in while you are working in the village.

We feel that our requests are fair and reasonable for everyone; if you have any questions or concerns about any of these guidelines, please don't hesitate to contact us before packing your electronic devices.